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SUBJECTS:

JAMES RIDDLE HOFFA
JOSEPH RAYMOND MEROLA

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PG 62-2702
JSP/RLG
(1)

On September 5, 1961, former PG 509-C, who in the past has supplied reliable information, was interviewed by SA JOHN S. PORTELLA at the Hotel Webster Hall, Pittsburgh, Pa. Informant advised that he has known BENNIE HUSICK all his life; that HUSICK left Pittsburgh sometime during 1954, and went to Miami Beach, Florida; that while in Pittsburgh, HUSICK was in the narcotic racket and fencing racket; that shortly after he left Pittsburgh and arrived in Miami in 1954, it is rumored that BENNIE made a "big score" in the narcotics field in Florida which give him his start; that soon after his arrival in Miami Beach, he associated himself with DAVE YARAS, JOE MASI, MIKE COPPOLA, JOE B (informant knows this person by no other name), and FAT TONY (informant knows this person by no other name); that HUSICK at the present time is part of a group that operates a bookmaking and gambling joint on Washington Street between 5th and 6th Streets on Miami Beach, Florida; that this spot is the only place on the beach that has a ticker tape operating; that JOE MASI is the undisputed boss of Miami Beach, and a very close friend and associate of BENNIE HUSICK; that over one half of all the bookmakers in Miami Beach and Miami, Florida, turn in to HUSICK and MASI; that in addition to gambling and bookmaking, HUSICK, using "outfit money", is the top "Shylock" in Miami Beach; that MIKE COPPOLA and FAT TONY run a numbers and sports betting business and turn everything in to HUSICK and MASI; that JOE B from Detroit is also in Miami Beach and closely associated with HUSICK and MASI; and that MASI maintains an office at 212 23rd Street, Miami Beach, Florida, where he generally can be located until 1:00 p.m.; and MASI conducts most of his business from the office he maintains on the ground floor at the above address.

Informant stated that about 4 years ago BENNIE HUSICK was involved in attempting to organize the cab drivers in Miami Beach, Florida, and at that time he had a close connection with a top labor leader, whose identity is not known to the informant. Informant stated that while HUSICK was engaged in this type of activity, he was using the services of a Pittsburgh man, JOE DISNOFF, who at that time was in Miami Beach driving a taxi cab.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Copy to:

Report of: GEORGE KEEFER
Date: 9/8/61

Office: PITTSBURGH

Field Office File #: Pittsburgh 62-2702

Bureau File #: 63-5327

Title: JAMES RIDDLE HOFFA;
BENJAMIN HUSICKCharacter: MISCELLANEOUS - INFORMATION CONCERNING
(ACCOUNTING AND FRAUD SECTION)

Synopsis:

Employers and neighbors of BENJAMIN HUSICK at Pittsburgh, Pa., 1944-53, describe him as transient, "two-bit gambler," "square," and salesman of anything he could lay hands on. No bank account located. HUSICK owned one dwelling during 1944-45. Court officials, witnesses, jurors and attorneys involved in 1948-49 prosecution of HUSICK at Pittsburgh, Pa., unable to furnish specific background information concerning him. Similar results obtained from persons involved in subsequent jury fixing proceedings in 1949 and surety of the peace charge in 1953. HUSICK's divorces from GRACE in 1940 and BEATRICE in 1953 at Pittsburgh verified. Whereabouts of ex-wives unknown. Credit and arrest checks on his present wife, ELIZABETH MARGARETTA MC BRIDE HUSICK, nee SPENCER, negative. No record of HUSICK as holder of wagering stamp. Records of U. S. Narcotics Bureau describe him as "opium smoker" in 1949.

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(2)

PG 62-2702

Inquiry of DOLSO SOLARI at 500 South Lang St., disclosed that he purchased the apartment building at 6756 Mc Pherson Boulevard during late 1954 through a realtor, HOWARD ANTES, located on Penn Ave. in Wilkinsburg, Pa.

Inquiry of HOWARD ANTES, Penn Ave., Wilkinsburg, Pa., disclosed that the owner of the building at 6756 Mc Pherson Boulevard prior to 1954 was PATRICK J. CONWAY, who resides at 858 E. Hutchinson Ave., Edgewood, Pa.

Mr. PATRICK J. CONWAY, 858 East Hutchinson Ave., Edgewood, advised that he purchased the apartment at 6756 Mc Pherson Boulevard during 1953 and that to the best of his recollection no one occupied any of the apartments by the name of HUSICK. Mr. CONWAY further stated that he maintained no rental receipts or any other records concerning his rentals of this property and that he knew of no one presently in the Pittsburgh area who would be in a position to advise as to the occupancies of the property during 1953.

On September 8, 1961, Mr. GEORGE EMRICH, Investigator for U. S. Narcotics Bureau, Federal Building, advised that records of his office reflect that on January 28, 1949, BENJAMIN HUSICK, who had robbed a bank in Wilkinsburg, Pa., in 1948, was an opium smoker.